

BORDERLANDS
REFLECTIONS
•
THE UNITED STATES
AND
CANADA

BY
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AND
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BORDERLANDS MONOGRAPH SERIES #1



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The Borderlands Project

Americans and Canadians live together in North America as friends, allies, and partners in trade. The 5,000-mile border accommodates a diverse flow of people, commodities, and ideas. It is a paradox, but the sense of mutual security and amity afforded by a century's experience with the "undefended" border masks the border's complexity and importance. The open border is an immense asset that is routinely taken for granted. Consequently, the border relationship of Canada and the United States has not been adequately reflected in public policy discussions in the two countries.

The premise of the Borderlands Project is that North America runs more naturally north and south than east and west as specified by national boundaries, and that modern communication and efficient transportation help to blur distinctions between regional neighbors. While people living near the border pay allegiance to their respective sovereign authorities in Washington, D.C. and Ottawa, they sometimes have more in common with neighbors across the border than with their fellow citizens.

The Borderlands Project is meant to promote greater recognition and understanding of the status of the United States and Canada as border neighbors. It is a comprehensive study of transborder attributes undertaken by a multidisciplinary team of social science and humanities scholars from both sides of the border. The study will culminate in the publication of an important reference book for educators, government officials, business and civic leaders, journalists, and general readers in both countries. A series of monographs reporting on current borderlands research is also offered, as a record of scholarship in this cross-disciplinary area. The Borderlands Project constitutes a new set of lenses for seeing the two-way importance of the American-Canadian relation-

ship. The project is designed to communicate the results of borderlands research to a growing audience in both countries.

The American-Canadian border provides a rare model of a social laboratory. Most of the eastern half is a natural water division between the two countries; the western half is an artificial surveyor's line. Which is the more real division between attitudes, values, and allegiances? In some cases, similarities (the pervasive impact of television, for instance) bring border neighbors closer together. In other cases, the similarities of some adjacent regions (for example, the reliance on basic industries such as farming or automaking) may produce competitive frustrations.

The American-Canadian Borderlands Project is not driven by ideological commitment: neither nationalist nor continentalist agendas have informed it. As a new set of lenses for policymakers, it is meant only to sharpen the images of reality formed by competition and cooperation between two industrial democracies in North America.

Acknowledgment

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Borderlands Monograph Series

The Borderlands Project is a research and compiling effort designed to produce a borderlands sourcebook for government officials, educators, and private-sector executives in both the United States and Canada. With more than 100 scholars involved in borderlands research, the project has received numerous manuscripts. In order to communicate research rapidly and to establish a borderlands dialogue, we have also inaugurated a Borderlands Monograph Series. Each monograph is a major statement of current work in some aspect of American-Canadian relations, and, as a whole, the series will stand as a record of the depth and diversity of borderlands research, as applied to the relationship between Canada and the United States.

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In October 1988, Dr. Lauren McKinsey, the originator and director of the Borderlands Project, suffered a stroke. Lauren is recovering now, and looks forward to returning soon to this project and his other scholarly endeavors. Dr. McKinsey's colleagues, friends, and coworkers on the Borderlands Project wish to dedicate the first monograph to him, and to wish him a rapid and complete recovery.



1. Introduction: Purpose and Significance

A span of over 5,000 miles is perhaps the most salient feature of the boundary that separates and links the United States and Canada. This extensive boundary both divides and unites, and its permeability is just as remarkable as its length. Through the border flows a diverse tide of people, ideas, and goods; in this sense, it acts more like a sieve than a shield. Americans and Canadians alike take for granted the mutual security, ease of access, and genuine sense of amity stemming from a century's experience with the vaunted "undefended" border.

In contrast, one may imagine the costs of arming a million soldiers to patrol a steel ribbon that partitions North America. Unlike many border antagonists around the globe, Canadians and Americans are able to marshal resources for constructive engagements. These two countries have shown that it is possible to achieve joint objectives without subordinating social or cultural diversity, and many see this successful and unique bilateral relationship as a model for the management of rising global interdependence.

This essay introduces a methodology for studying the complex American-Canadian relationship from a borderlands perspective.¹ It is the first in a series of monographs to be published on the subject. The series' authors are Canadians and Americans who believe that scholars in both countries share the task of exploring the border's significance. Scholars contributing to the Borderlands Project come from many disciplines, including history, geography, economics, political science, sociology, anthropology, literature, and fine arts. The fact that a single, conventional methodology with which to examine border issues does not exist, allows us the freedom to explore those issues from a combination of approaches within this range of academic disciplines.

The Borderlands Project may help Americans and Canadians to better appreciate each other. Moreover, through an examination of

mirrored experiences at the border, Americans and Canadians may come to better understand themselves and their values. Seymour Martin Lipset has remarked of American scholars that: "Geographers, historians, political scientists, economists or literary critics can learn more about their own country in looking at Canada because Canada is close enough to provide a frame of reference yet distinct enough to search for different explanations."² His remarks are valid for Canadian scholars as well. In this tradition, the concept of borderlands is offered as a new set of lenses for seeing the ways in which the destinies of the United States and Canada both converge and diverge.

2. Borders, Border Regions, and Borderlands

Other borderlands scholars have paid little attention to the relationship of the United States and Canada because they do not see evidence of a continent-wide borderlands. In contrast, it is possible that the long American-Canadian boundary may indeed host several discrete borderlands that are based on regional affinities. The existence of several international regions—the Atlantic, the St. Lawrence, the Great Lakes, the plains and prairies, and the Rockies and Pacific—gives scholars a rare opportunity to compare the conditions that foster or impede the emergence of a borderlands.

This study looks to the intersection of political science and geography for a borderlands paradigm. The primary features of a borderlands are revealed in the dialectic between "boundary" as a political demarcation, and "region" as a geographic entity which may be resistant to an artificial division imposed by a political border. Nations continue to be defined by spatial mass, and borders tend to reify the differences between peoples; borders give a land-based frame of reference to social, cultural, or linguistic differences. International boundaries demarcate national identity, while political borders may either reinforce or obscure the contours of the population groups within nation-states.

The global community provides numerous examples of nation-states that defy logic: borders divide some peoples while they combine other groups with disparate cultures under the same flag. Scattered across the continents are both examples of nations without states and cases of states with multiple nations: China; the

Basel region of France, Germany, and Switzerland (*Regio Baseliensis*); Nigeria; Bangladesh; Belgium; partitioned Germany, Korea and Vietnam; Scotland, Ireland, and Wales; Malaysia; the Soviet Union. Affinities of language, culture, religion, or ethnicity may pay little or no respect to political boundaries.

Many questions about political identity arise: What is the impact of the people on the land, and of the land on the people? How do language, culture, religion, or an economic system act as the glue that holds collections of people in political communities? Are political borders natural boundaries, or are they little more than the residue of conquests that become legitimized by the socialization of successive generations? Scholars who address such topics as nationalism, regionalism, or tribalism deal with some facet of the borderlands issue because the groups or concentrations of people they study generally see territorial claims and symbolic homeland issues in terms of geographical boundaries. Other subjects whose study implicitly encompasses borderlands themes include separatist movements, diasporas, regional integration and neofunctionalism, irredentism, and buffer states.³

The common dimension of these subjects is the assumption on the part of many observers that the border is in the "wrong" place and is a barrier to the mutual goals of divided peoples. The people are distributed in groups characterized by race, religion, class, or other attributes in ways that are inappropriate to sovereign demarcations. Hence, the borderlands, in this context, might be described as the area at the edge of two nation-states in which assertions of national sovereignty are not matched by popular, nonpolitical identifications. The residents at the fringes of some nation-states may not all feel themselves to be "complete" citizens. The borderlands can be seen as a place where societies can either come together or come apart.

Most countries share a border with at least one other country. (Only island nations do not have a borderlands in the broadest sense.) It is more accurate, however, to speak of these shared areas as mere border regions. Some of these border regions evolve into genuine borderlands while many others do not. The challenge is to identify how this evolution from border, to border region, to borderlands takes place:

Border: A border is the line which divides one political entity—one nation-state, in the case of the American-Canadian border—

from another. It identifies the territory over which the nation-state can assert and defend its claim of jurisdiction and control. Because political authority is identified with territory, the border serves to define the limits of sovereignty. It reflects the ability of the government to monopolize the political allegiance of citizens.

Border Region: A border region is a contiguous zone in which exchanges between two nation-states take place. The width of a border region may vary greatly, depending on the nature of the exchanges. In a narrow sense, one could argue that any explicit crossing of the border occurs only at the border itself. In a broad sense, some border crossings have impacts extending deep into the interior of one country or the other; for example, the technological exploitation of airwaves acts to obliterate most attempts to constrain this exchange. Exchanges are likely to increase with proximity to the boundary but there is no fixed distance between the boundary itself and the interior edge of the border region.

Borderlands: Borderlands is a region jointly shared by two nations that houses people with common social characteristics in spite of the political boundary between them. In a more narrow sense, borderlands can be said to exist when shared characteristics within the region set it apart from the country that contains it: residents share properties of the region, and this gives them more in common with each other than with members of their respective dominant cultures. More broadly, the borderlands is an area in which interaction has a tempering effect on the central tendencies of each society. It is assumed that the ways in which two political communities blend into each other is most clearly revealed in their borderlands.

The similarities in a borderlands may be both subjective and objective. In the subjective sense, the borderlands is a mixing zone in which people share feelings, beliefs, and values with their cohorts across the border. The flow of people back and forth across the zone's internal border may remind inhabitants of common roots and instill feelings of shared destiny. In contrast, an objective borderlands is one in which similar properties are discovered to exist even when experiences are independent of direct transactions between its people. For example, even when there is no explicit bonding in a borderlands region, there may be a common

hinterland syndrome that causes both border fringes to be equally resentful of their respective central government's policies. Between a subjective and an objective borderlands is the hybrid case in which there may be little direct interaction of people, yet in which ideas may be widely shared because of modern telecommunication.

The causes of borderlands lie in the distribution and interaction of physical and social characteristics near the border. Both sides of the border region might feature similar terrain or resources, and support similar economies. People physically leave one society and enter another at the border. They are more likely to visit and, if they migrate, live in the areas closer to the border. Today, the transfer of culture via the airwaves is most apparent at the border. These factors help to explain a convergence of language, ethnicity, or religious patterns in a border region.

The understanding of borderlands may have important consequences for the stability of nation-states, especially those, such as Israel, with disputed regions: in the West Bank, citizen allegiance is divided between two claims to sovereignty. Such pressure may impel the creation of a separate entity between the two nation-states, lead to the annexation of the entire border region by one country or the other, or provide the conditions conducive to the merger of the nation-states. Evidence of the level of concern for these consequences can be seen in the presence of policies, in either of the countries, that foster open or closed border conditions. An open border probably indicates that neither society fears cultural penetration from borderlands interaction, while a closed border may be taken as a sign of apprehension in one nation about the cultural penetration of the other.

The most interesting research questions prompt the exploration of the manner in which borderlands evolve from border regions. The borderlands paradigm can be applied to any shared border region to help discern whether or not a borderlands has emerged. Borderlands are actually a matter of degree. All shared border regions could be arrayed on a continuum from cases showing little or no evidence of borderlands phenomena to cases showing considerable evidence that a borderlands exists.

Some scholars have decided that an American-Canadian borderlands does not exist—at least not one that compares favorably with the American-Mexican borderlands. Scholars of this southern region point to a zone of interaction of virtually uniform

width, covering the entire border span. This zone exhibits a commonality of objective features and a sense of community that sets the region apart from the main culture in either the United States or Mexico. Clearly, the American-Canadian borderlands is more complex, certainly more diverse, and at first glance less apparent.

The key aspect of the borderlands seems to be the indivisibility of perspective created and reinforced by regular contact between borderland inhabitants of the two national groups. Ivo Duchacek notes of American-Mexican border sister cities: "The intermingling of people, culture, and economy in these twin cities endows the whole frontier belt with its special flavor—*ambiente*."⁴ Ellwyn Stoddard (quoted by Duchacek) contends that "a strong border culture extends along the entire length of our southwestern border with Mexico. . . . We depend on one another. To try to separate us [U.S.-Mexico Borderlands] will kill both of the Siamese twins."⁵

Set against this model, the idea of an American-Canadian borderlands would seem to pale. For one thing, the border itself is too long (more than twice the length of the American-Mexican border) and crosses too many regions to presume a continuous zone of uniform width. For another, the border is sparsely populated and has few mixing zones such as those clearly marked by the American-Mexican border cities. Twin cities on the Canadian-American border remain distinct. In a broader context, the presence of culturally distinct Quebec interrupts whatever uniform interaction might be postulated. Finally, because there are no interior provinces, it could be argued that all of populated Canada is a borderland; hence it is not possible to demarcate the borderlands from the hinterland.⁶

These characteristics are viewed as shortcomings by some scholars, and have led them to dismiss the American-Canadian borderlands. Duchacek argues: "The concept of a special border political culture and feeling of transborder affinity or loyalty fits the Alemannic Rhine Valley as well as the biethnic U.S.-Mexican border with its intertwined Hispanic/U.S. cultures but seems misplaced when applied to the U.S.-Canadian border." About borderlands, he says: "The same term when applied to the forty-ninth parallel sounds awkward, and few of us would use it."⁷ The burden of proof is on the "few of us," the acolytes who think the borderlands concept provides a way to shed new light on the American-Canadian relationship.

3. Geographical Diversity: Regional Borderlands Cultures

The length of a border works against its uniformity. This fact may help explain why others have found little evidence of a uniform border region between Canada and the United States. The long border crosses several regions shared by the two countries: the Atlantic, the St. Lawrence, the Great Lakes, the plains and prairies, and the Rockies and Pacific. These geographic regions are the primary evidence that North America runs more naturally from north to south than from east to west. Joel Garreau captures this reality in his popular configuration of North America as "nine nations."⁸ Garreau shows not only how culture is a differentiating force among North American regions, but also how it ties regions together across the international borders. This is especially apparent in the American-Canadian borderlands.

The concept of borderlands as a transboundary zone of interaction, exchange, and sharing needs, may be applied to the several American-Canadian border regions. The point of departure is an understanding of how subnational linkages are developed and maintained within the constraints of the two dominant national cultures. Some have argued that Canada and the United States coexist in a form of "stabilized pluralism."⁹ Each culture is strong enough to tolerate some of the cultural synthesis which occurs when countries with similar cultures interact.¹⁰ The border regions are the zones of cultural synthesis in which we may examine subnational affinities—kinship ties, traditions, values, perceptions, and even folkways—to determine their role in adjusting distinct national cultures.

The beguiling simplicity of the border tends to mask the corridors through which this cultural transfer and synthesis is accomplished. Cole Harris has appropriately visualized Canada's settlement pattern as an archipelago, with many islands running along a horizon that is deceptively abrupt, like the border itself.¹¹ A closer look reveals that each regional island of the cultural archipelago extends into receptive areas in the adjacent United States to the south. At the risk of extending this metaphor too far, the reader may visualize the subsurface extension of these islands joined in the regional matrix of the United States. Back at the surface, or the boundary, at the shores of each island, a distinctive parallax marks the transition between the two countries in each

cross-border region.

In applying this image to the search for evidence of cultural transfer across the boundary, geographers may identify six cultural landscape types. Each of the traditionally accepted regions of the long border actually contains some mixture of these types, because the cross-border adjustments occur in varying degrees. A discussion of these models helps to explain the difference in intensity of flows and interactions across the boundary in the various regions.

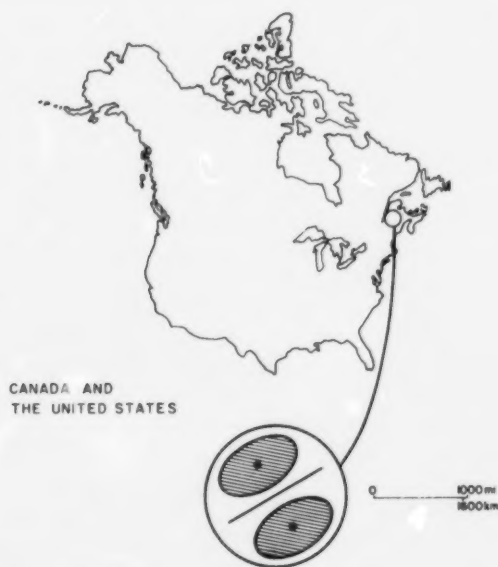


Figure 1

Divided Cultural Enclaves

Divided Cultural Enclaves: These enclaves are characterized by separate development and cultural discontinuity (fig. 1). The border is used by both countries to separate that which is Canadian from that which is American. Examples along the boundary are rare because the boundary is seldom imposed in a well-established cultural region. The most notable illustration may be the Republique du Madawaska, which was cut in two in the 1840s by the adjustment of the disputed international boundary. There is strong

evidence of the retention of cultural continuity across the border inside the homes of Madawaska; in contrast, the exterior of the homes and the outward appearance of properties often signal the inhabitants' allegiance, either to American or Canadian material culture.

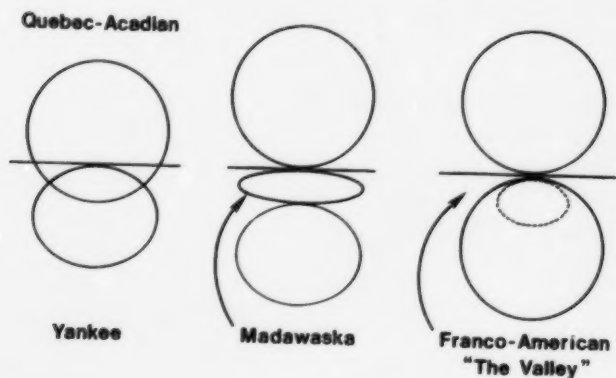


Figure 2

The Emergence of Madawaska and the Persistence of the Franco-American "Valley"

After the boundary was imposed, Yankee influences spread north into the isolated St. John River valley which was occupied by peoples of Quebec and Acadian ancestry (fig. 2). Those on the American side of the boundary found it advantageous, and often necessary, to embrace American cultural symbols in order to coexist with Yankee neighbors. These Madawaskayan at first resisted acculturation by establishing a culture distinct from both the Yankees in the adjacent Aroostook River valley and the French-Canadian kin across the border. Although the distinct cultural identity of Madawaska has eroded in the twentieth century, the valley remains a visible enclave of Franco-American culture.

The difference in American and Canadian material culture in the upper St. John region may be illustrated by any one of several examples. Most prominent among these are the barn-building practices of the nineteenth century: established, traditional Quebec and Acadian barn styles were predominant on the Canadian side of



Figure 3

The Distribution of Barn types as an Illustration of Borderlands Culture in the Upper St. John Valley of Maine and New Brunswick

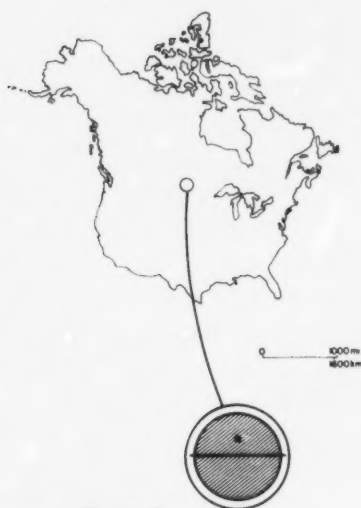


Figure 4

Cross-Border Influence Zone

the border (fig. 3).¹² These styles—long, multiple-bay structures originated along the St. Lawrence River in Quebec, and square, two-bay barns characteristic throughout Acadia—also were found in Madawaska. Yankee preference for connecting the house to farm buildings did not extend into the upper St. John River valley. Instead, the Madawaskayan built a twin barn. Based on an antecedent found in Quebec, this style also displayed a Yankee affinity for connected structures. It signaled a borderlands compromise, and still stands today as evidence of the existence of a divided cultural enclave.

Cross-Border Influence Zones: These exist where one place serves as a “cultural hearth” for people on both sides of the border (fig. 4). Steinbach is a Mennonite cultural center in Manitoba, which serves the faithful in North Dakota as well. Conversely, Point Roberts, Washington, serves the unfaithful in adjacent British Columbia.



Figure 5

Unbalanced Influence



Figure 6

Balanced Cultural Interaction

Unbalanced Influence: This occurs when one center is at the border and its counterpart is some distance removed (fig. 5). A large center like Vancouver may overshadow a smaller place like Bellingham, Washington. An especially vital cultural feature or a complex of cultural elements on one side of the border spills over the boundary to influence, and sometimes overpower, inhabitants of the other side. The French influence emanating from Montreal infiltrates Plattsburgh, New York, and has an impact on Burlington, Vermont.

Balanced Cultural Interaction: This occurs between comparable centers, especially urban centers with equivalent levels of development (fig. 6). Comparable centers are particularly important in maintaining cultural continuity and cross-border linkages in otherwise sparsely populated areas. Examples of this type of interaction are apparent in the relationships between Thunder Bay and Duluth, and between Bangor and St. John.



Figure 7
Twin Cities



Figure 8
Empty Areas

Twin Cities: Twin Cities serve as the physical crossing points between the two societies (fig. 7). Because they perform this function, twin cities may be actually quite different from each other. Like border places of unequal size, twin cities mediate cultural differences where cross-border flows are concentrated in narrow exchange corridors. Here boundaries appear stronger and cultural ties are less apparent. Where cross-border flows are selective or subdued, cultural ties appear stronger and boundary lines are less apparent. Lying astride the boundary, then, twin cities may be isolated from the rest of their region in either country, or they may be the link points in well-established corridors. The Sault Ste. Maries and the Niagaras, for example, are sites of cultural conversion. Here the parallax is most extreme. Patrick McGreevy has designated Niagara Falls as the "end of America and the beginning of Canada," a frontier where Americans still deny the finality of the border, and a place where Canadians celebrate its firm establishment.¹³

Empty Areas: These are buffer zones with few inhabitants and little cultural interaction (fig. 8). An empty area has no focus or core on either side. In some areas, the Yukon-Alaska border region for example, historical interaction and the cultural continuity in native settlement are the only borderlands characteristics.

Examples may be drawn from the length of the boundary zone to explore the nature of subnational cultures, to define their integrative elements, to explain their vitality, and to reveal their influence in shaping the relations between people in the two countries. In the East, every type of subnational link is in evidence. Cultural juxtaposition is the rule in the Great Lakes. In the West, one type of connection tends to predominate in each physically distinct region: cross-border influence zones in the plains; balanced interaction in narrow cordilleran valleys; unbalanced influence on the Pacific Slope; and the vast empty areas of the 141st meridian. Clearly, the degree of intensity of interactions varies greatly: some areas are only border regions, whereas others have remained, or evolved into borderlands.

The legacy of borderlands affinity has been shaped over centuries. During the important formative period of the nineteenth century, cultural synthesis was achieved by large migrations—down into New England, across the upper lakes, into and out of Ontario, up and down the extensive plains, into British Columbia, and up the Pacific coast. The maintenance of the cultural link to the homeland depended on residential segregation, the tendency to marry within the immigrant group, and seasonal migration across the border. A stream of new immigrants and letters and newspapers helped the cultural enclaves across the border stay current with changes in the homeland.

All of these forces were apparent in nineteenth-century Quebec's extension into New England—an extension reinforced by language and religious solidarity. Although less conspicuous, they are also found in New England's earlier outpost in Nova Scotia, and in the communities of ethnic minorities in southern Ontario and the West. These subnational cultures spread across the border through a vernacular expression rather than a more literate one and, consequently, did not herald the advance of either an American or Canadian (British) national culture. In this way, the nineteenth-century migrations created an interlocking of culture that is a unique, North American heritage for people on both sides of the

border.

Today, in the twentieth century, these latent cultural bonds underlie new dimensions of interaction, including trade and tourism. Quebec's initiatives to revive Franco-American ties with New England are designed not only to extend "*la francophonie*" but also to enhance trade. The potential for multibillion-dollar electricity sales is an understandable incentive for activating a cultural linkage that had become largely passive in recent decades. This region provides a good example of the "*ambiente*" of a subjective borderlands in which exchange and interaction are the keys to a common sense of place.

In contrast, the plains and prairies are an objective borderlands whose residents have had common—but not necessarily converging—hinterland experiences. Arguably, the conditions most naturally conducive to the formation of a borderlands exist here: the forty-ninth parallel artificially divided the buffalo hunt, the dust bowl, and the "land of the wind-chill factor."¹⁴ For the fleeing Sioux and other tribes, the surveyor's legacy became the "Medicine Line" that reined in both the troopers chasing them northward and the Mounties turning them southward.¹⁵ Sitting Bull, chief of the Sioux, did not require the tools of modern borderlands scholarship to explain the indivisibility of the plains and prairies in 1876. He bluntly stated: "The meat of the buffalo tastes the same on both sides of the border."¹⁶

Today, cross-border affinities are probably least formalized in this region where life depends mainly on agriculture and resource extraction. The sparseness of the population and the fact that long trips are required to rendezvous may reinforce a sense of isolation on the plains. And there may be a common sense in the region of alienation from distant economic and political forces and from the centers of the two containing countries.¹⁷ But these feelings are not explicitly shared across the border. For a brief period during the energy crisis of the 1970s, Wallace Stegner's "plains" and Frederick Philip Grove's "prairies" may have been part of a reinforced vision of a transborder western interior, with the sentinels of commerce—Houston, Denver, Calgary, and Edmonton—all in a line.¹⁸ But, more recently, federal policies on regional development together with allegations of production subsidies and other trade-distorting practices have created tension between these two sets of neighbors trying to sell the same products in shrinking world markets. This is

still Joel Garreau's "empty quarter" or Carl Kraenzel's "Yonland," with its high price of overcoming the costs of space.¹⁹

The regional quality of the borderlands allows us to appreciate the diversity of the American-Canadian relationship. The debate over free trade accentuates the magnitude of the bilateral relationship, but it exaggerates the significance of its economic and political components. Underlying the massive cross-border flow of goods and services are subnational structures that evolved to articulate and regulate the growing interaction in the boundary zone. These structures are rooted deeply in regional cultures which transcend the border. They are not innovations; they are contemporary manifestations of traditional ways of mediating exchanges.

Acknowledging the subnational extension of regional cultures across the boundary complicates the already elusive notion of cultural identity for Canadians. Consensus on identity is reached by Canadians only when their cultural autonomy seems to be threatened by Americans. At other times, subnational cultures articulate the Canadian-American relationship and these well-established borderland linkages mediate between the two countries. The strength and resiliency of the plates, folds, and intrusions of subnational culture across the American-Canadian boundary seem to ensure that the two countries will never be too close—or too far apart.

But this essay outlines a prospectus, not a conclusion. More research case studies are required before we will understand how the borderlands operate. What activates a latent cultural link? Why is it activated only in some cases? What assemblage of elements is necessary to forge and sustain a cross-border cultural link? To answer these questions, an imaginative exploration of the borderlands at regional and local levels is required.

Cole Harris writes: "There is no more fascinating question about North Americans than whether our civilization is unitary or plural."²⁰ He argues eloquently for the plural civilization model, one that divides Canada from the United States at the primary level of differentiation, and proceeds to identify distinct regional entities in Canada, and somewhat less well-defined ones in the United States. His explanation for regional distinction is explicit: "Increasingly in the nineteenth century, economics rather than culture underlay regional differentiation. . . . Paul Bunyan was a logger, not a Swede or an Englishman." He continues:

In an economy and technology as dynamic as the North American, regional cultural differentiation based on economy was inherently ephemeral. Regional ways were vulnerable to economic change and rarely survived several generations in one area. Differentiation tended to be . . . socioeconomic rather than cultural and regional, rooted in place in the productive system rather than in place on the land and conducive to class rather than to regional consciousness.²¹

Harris may go too far in this selective emphasis on socioeconomic differentiation. Indeed, one of the strongest and most vibrant regions turning on the cultural dynamic is Quebec, his area of scholarly interest. Regional culture may be more subtle and elusive as an integrating and sustaining force, nevertheless, it emerges to explain the roots that identify and the ties that bind. Paul Bunyan was more than a logger; he was a woodsman representing a universal woodsmen's culture, replete with the tall tales, spruce-gum boxes, and folk songs. Woodsmen's ways defined a subnational culture linking nineteenth-century Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Appalachian Quebec, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Maine. Here is one possible example of a borderlands link encompassing the entire border: a regional consciousness originated in the Northeast, and eventually stretched across borderlands forests in the Great Lakes region and in the Northwest.

4. The Interdisciplinary Research Agenda

Geographers and political scientists may presume to lead the way, but the search for evidence of the borderlands depends on scholars in many disciplines. The unit of analysis has a spatial dimension, and all of the properties of identity are measured within specified land masses. But the relevant properties to examine go beyond landforms to include language, class, ethnicity, religion, transportation and communication patterns, and other indicators of cleavages or homogeneity. The recurring question is whether the political border reinforces or interrupts natural integrity and patterns of social commonality.

Economics: Some of the most accessible data about borderlands lies in the realm of economics. Regions are often characterized in terms of their economic production in the sectors of agriculture, industry, mining, tourism, forestry, or other sectors that may be measured in an equally straightforward fashion. Transboundary flows of goods, services, and investment between the United States and Canada are systematically recorded and have been studied extensively.

The affinity of border neighbors in North America depends heavily on the nature of their regional economies: are they complementary, competitive, or in conflict? Growing wheat on the plains and prairies to feed a hungry world has now become a competitive endeavor since most of the world is "awash in grain."²² Building hydropower dams in northern Quebec to meet the rising demand in New England and New York, however, illustrates a consensual bargain. The Borderlands Project will examine the varying nature of the relations between regional economies.

The impact of economic activity on the environment poses several borderlands themes. Businesses strive to increase their profit margins by cutting costs. These costs are sometimes externalized when they pass from customers to taxpayers, foreigners, or future generations, or when businesses use environmental resources as sinks and sewers. It is difficult to control these practices when they occur entirely within one jurisdiction; it is even harder when the problem crosses international boundaries. Water quality and air quality are two major environmental issues in North America which have a borderlands theme (for Mexico and the United States as well as for Canada and the United States).

A watershed is an example of a common pool resource whose benefits each country attempts to maximize. The case of the Great Lakes, divided at the border, illustrates the point that neither country can unilaterally manage its share of the resource while oblivious of the interests of the other. American pollution washes up on Canadian shores, and vice versa. Both countries should be expected to seek mutually acceptable policies, since both are upstream producers and downstream victims of pollution. This situation may be compared with that of the western border, where both countries might have less incentive for resolving transboundary water problems because the rivers there often rise in their headwaters in one country, and deposit pollution downstream in

the other. One country produces pollution, the other country receives it. This comparison of eastern and western water policy regimes suggests the opportunities for systematic comparison afforded by the borderlands paradigm.²³

International airsheds have become dumping grounds for pollutants delivered high into the atmosphere. The low costs of electricity in one region are made possible by acidic precipitation in lakes, in forests, or on historic monuments elsewhere. Because the effects may be witnessed far from the border itself, acid rain is not as readily seen as a borderlands problem, at least not in comparison with water pollution. However, the pressure to curtail coal-burning emissions in the Ohio River valley has come largely from a cross-border coalition of environmental interests in New England and eastern Canada, which together may be said to constitute a bioregion.²⁴

Sociology: Sociologists address the question of how Canadians differ from Americans. Divergences in attitudes, beliefs, and values may be compared with divergences in settlement, history, and economic and political systems. Seymour Martin Lipset, in stressing how the values of one nation politically and economically differentiate it from the nation across the border, notes the observations made by Friedrich Engels on his visit to both Canada and the United States in 1888: "Here one sees how necessary the *feverish speculative spirit* of the Americans is for the rapid development of a new country." Engels anticipated the eventual elimination of "this ridiculous boundary line" separating the two countries.²⁵

The "ridiculous" boundary has remained, but it has barely constrained the flow of people. The cross-fertilization of values between the two cultures stems from this flow. Many Canadians have been Americans and many Americans have been Canadians. Crossing the border has sometimes been the result of a major political event: the Loyalist exodus to Canada following the American Revolution; the Acadian expulsion from Canada in the wake of the British conquest of the French; the operation of the underground railroad before the Civil War, and again during the Vietnam War. Scholars in Canada today—especially in Quebec—are paying more attention to tracing North American "roots."²⁶

The contemporary convergence of values is probably attribut-

able to the pervasiveness of modern communication. Television penetrates the border with ease. Canadians are increasingly sensitive to this subtle erosion of "cultural sovereignty"; they have demanded that the publishing and media industries be kept off the table in the recent free trade negotiations. The "border war" over communication policy is featured elsewhere in the Borderlands Project.²⁷

Other innovative ways of looking at border interactions have been proposed. The comparison of grave-marker epitaphs on either side of the border may reveal shared cultural elements.²⁸ Regression analysis of border-crossing stations examines the nature and frequency of the movement of persons.²⁹ Tracing the flow of ethnic groups through letters and diaries can reveal patterns of assimilation and isolation. Content analysis of newspapers can demonstrate value consensus and change.

History: The degree of porosity of a modern border may be partly the legacy of historical events. The fashion in which the processes of setting and settling the border intertwined needs careful examination. It is possible that a borderlands existed in an earlier era, and that it was altered over time by the imposition of a closed political boundary. Or, modern transportation and communication may have overcome the inertia of an earlier era to produce contemporary borderlands phenomena. Historical perspective helps to distinguish the possible aberration of current events from real long-term trends.

For the analysis of the American and Canadian borderlands, the history of carving a border between two new nations expanding westward is axiomatic. There is the trap, however, of dwelling on the historical symbolism of the border, both in the past context of the "struggle for the border" and the present context of the "undefended border."³⁰ Much of our knowledge about the border comes from anecdotal, sentimental, or deferential references. As Gilles Langelier notes: "The Canada-U.S. border is best known to the average person for certain peculiarities." He refers to Point Roberts, Washington, which can be reached overland from the United States only by going through British Columbia, and to "the Haskell Opera House, which straddles the border between Rock Island in Quebec and Derby Line in Vermont."³¹

The challenge is to use historical evidence in systematic

analysis. Bernard DeVoto, in his foreword to Joseph Kinsey Howard's classic epic about Louis Riel, notes that "*Strange Empire* belongs to a small group of studies that refuses to treat North American history as at best a dichotomy. The experience it deals with is common to Americans and Canadians and Mr. Howard has treated it as indivisible."³² That standard should be applied to historical analysis of the borderlands when such analysis examines the changing views about the border over time, from the disputed to the undefended border, and when it examines the parallel race for the West via Manifest Destiny and the National Policy.

Literature: The Border as Fiction: "The Border as Fiction" is the title of an essay Clark Blaise has prepared for the Borderlands Project. The metaphor of Blaise's title is a reminder that not all of the properties of a borderlands are easily measurable by the tools of social science. Our metaphoric conception of the border can be as important as our more mundane, "objective" experience of it. Literary critics, artists, filmmakers, architects, and philosophers are needed to help reveal the essence of the borderlands.

Canadians are more likely than Americans to carry borderlands metaphors around in their heads. This is because Canadian culture is newer, has fewer contributors and participants, and is therefore more vulnerable, and because most Canadians reside within 100 miles of the border. Consequently, Canadians tend to see the border as the edge of their culture and the shield of their identity. They are motivated to write about the border in theoretical and ideological terms, using titles such as *Close the 49th Parallel*, or, *The 49th Paradox*.³³ Americans have seemed largely indifferent to border symbolism since the events that gave rise to the nineteenth-century rallying cry of "54-40 or fight!"

Literature is probably the best avenue to address the question of regional borderlands cultures. The plains and the prairies region is likely the most studied in terms of comparative literature. In his autobiographical *Wolf Willow*, Wallace Stegner captures the essence of the transparent boundary: "The 49th parallel ran directly through my childhood, dividing me in two," "But if winter and town made Canadians of us, summer and the homestead restored us to something nearly, if not quite, American. . . . for our lives slopped over the international boundary every summer day."³⁴

In his autobiography, *A Life in Our Times*, John Kenneth Galbraith talks about a political dimension of the borderlands from his youth in rural Ontario:

In those civilized days, indeed, it was felt by some that responsible citizenship did not involve an exclusive commitment to the political life of Canada . . . Canadian elections are on no fixed schedule; if a government is forced out or sees a chance of prolonging its tenure, they can be in spring, summer, autumn or even, as recently, in the Canadian winter. American elections, then as now, were always in November. This was after the crops were harvested in Canada and the seasonal migration to the assembly lines had begun. Accordingly, a man could vote in Canada in the summer and, by courtesy of the Detroit Democratic organization that assigned registered names, possibly from the local funeral directors, in Michigan in the autumn. No thought of corruption was involved. Men wished to have the best people in office in both countries.³⁵

Was this phenomenon a shared part of the civic culture of the region? To the extent that survey research is available, borderlands scholars could attempt to characterize aspects of the political culture of borderlands regions. Are there areas of public policy where Canadians and Americans sharing a particular border region actually have closer opinions than either group has with respective nationals? With sufficient resources, a survey instrument could be created to test this proposition directly.

Since the rules about the division of power between central and regional governments are apparently changing, the states and provinces have developed their own views about what may be at stake in cross-border negotiations involving economic cooperation or environmental diplomacy. One example of the work done in this area is Roger Swanson's study of state-provincial linkages.³⁶ It is hypothesized that "subdiplomatic" relations between the United States and Canada are being conducted by an increasing number of state and provincial actors. It may also be true that the frequency of interactions is greater for the border states than for the interior states, as the borderlands hypothesis presupposes.

5. Caveats on Methodology

From the preceding discussion of multidisciplinary perspectives, it is evident that borderlands is an elusive concept because it has practical, and even metaphorical, as well as geographical dimensions. Despite the primacy of land in the concept, it is impossible to delineate the exact boundaries of a borderlands in advance of its study. The functional "width" of the borderlands as a zone of sharing and interaction depends on which aspects of borderlands life are under examination. The borderlands may be assessed by examining a variety of its aspects: its trade and communication policies; its handling of environmental pollution; its methods of dispute resolution; its flocks of migratory waterfowl; the radio waves it generates and receives; the number of border-crossing stations it has. Hence, various social scientists or humanists may see the borderlands in different ways because its width may fluctuate from discipline to discipline. In terms of policy, the borderlands is also influenced by the "height" of the border: the border may be "raised" or "lowered" by governments depending on their goals in promoting or restricting different kinds of transboundary exchanges.³⁷

In the search for measurable, quantifiable variables, it is important not to mistake certain border-region phenomena as evidence of a borderlands relationship when—in reality—they are nothing more than a measure of general American-Canadian relations. The concept of the undefended border is, essentially, shorthand for the *overall* American-Canadian relationship. One example is the reporting of trade data: the volume of trade is measured at exit and entry points on the border, but that data, as reported, may not reflect the fact that trade is generated from the interior as well as from the border regions. On the other hand, the fact that goods and people must be counted at clustered border crossings brings a community into existence, a community that has grown up at the border because of customs and immigration requirements. The character of the border community will depend on whether there is a sense of an open, or of a closed border. Hence, the nature of that community is, indeed, a borderlands phenomenon.

Borderlands may be seen as either an *explanatory theory* or an *exploratory model* for examining Canadian-American relations. At this stage of the study, borderlands is a proposition, not a finding. It

is a way of organizing the questions we ask about the relationship, not the conclusions of analysis. The premise of this study is that the use of borderlands lenses will reveal important insights into the bilateral relationship, regardless of whether or not the existence of a continent-wide borderlands can be shown.

Taking a regional approach to the study of borderlands provides a conceptual advantage. Scholars have noted that the two countries provide a comparative social laboratory setting probably unmatched by any other pair of countries on the globe: language, history, political culture, and geography provide environmental similarities that allow the researcher to compare and concentrate on differences in policy priorities.³⁸ What is the importance of complementary democratic practices, one common tongue, a converging popular culture, and the habit Canadians and Americans have of tripping across each other's history?

The existence of regional diversity allows the researcher to take the principles of quasi-experimental design a step further. Regional diversity allows scholars to frame some research questions that are both more interesting and more rigorous than they would be if there were only a single borderlands. If this approach is used, it is possible for us to compare differences *within* regions with differences *between* regions that run east and west in both countries. It allows the researcher to avoid confronting the problem that nearly all of Canada is a border region because its northern reaches and its interior hinterland are so thinly populated.

Differences across the regions—and not just the notable case of the contrast between English and French cultures—allow for testing several propositions about the causes and consequences of borders from east to west. The eastern half of the border consists mainly of a natural water division between the two countries, while the western half is an artificial surveyor's line. Which is the more consequential division between beliefs, attitudes, values, and allegiances in North America?

6. The Integration Paradox

For any pair of nation-states, a border region should be expected to reveal more than the nature of the relations between them. It should also help to explain the differences and the similarities in the two societies. The border region may dramatize

the enmities that sustain separate sovereign loyalties, or magnify the similarities that call existing sovereign loyalties into question. Many Canadians fear a loss of identity under the weight of the American presence. Would an identified American-Canadian borderlands be seen as a contained, preliminary mixing zone which would eventually expand to include the entire border region? Does Canada risk being absorbed by the continent?

Political integration theory addresses the question of how larger political entities evolve from existing ones. The legitimacy of most nation-states depends on their having a large number of common properties—language, ethnicity, religion, culture—which support a national identity. According to the “spillover” hypothesis, a new political community may be created when economic and other transactions across political boundaries create new expectations that transcend existing loyalties, and, through socialization, legitimize a broader political authority.³⁹

Political integration theory has strong normative origins; that is to say, it was developed in order to arrange a permanent peace for Europe following the Second World War. With some notable exceptions, the theory has not been explicitly tested on the relationship between Canada and the United States. One explanation is that borders in North America are more clearly defined and have not been as volatile as those in Europe. North America generally has fewer large displaced populations and no important irredentist movements. In Europe, spillover resulted from the notion that living more closely together could overcome the national antagonisms that brought on the wrath of war. In North America, the hope is that unity of purpose may continue to coexist with the diversity that is the product of healthy nationalism. Still, the American-Canadian relationship does epitomize what theorists have called complex, asymmetric interdependence.⁴⁰ “Interdependence” means that actions in one country have effects in the other country, through multiple channels of interaction. “Asymmetry” refers to the fact that Canada is influenced more greatly by the United States than vice versa. “Complexity” refers to the tendency of decisions in one policy sphere to be influenced by, or linked to, decisions in another policy sphere.

The asymmetry has been amply documented. John Sloan Dickey notes: “The fact that the border operates very unequally as the dividing line between these two national cultures is, of course, a matter of history as well as geography. The fact is that the American

presence in all forms floods downstream into Canadian life while the Canadian presence, except in trade statistics, is rarely perceptible south of the border."⁴¹ For his 1972 book, Richard Preston used the title *The Influence of the United States on Canadian Development: Eleven Case Studies*.⁴² Yet in recent years the asymmetry has been ameliorated somewhat with a subtle southern invasion of Canadian capital and influence.⁴³ This reversal needs to be studied and documented more effectively. In it may be found another dimension for understanding the borderlands.

However, the trend toward complex, asymmetric interdependence continues. Improved communication and transportation tighten the geographic fit, and the passage of time reinforces the socialization process of successive generations. Dickey called it "a clear manifestation of an indigenous continentalism" that is inescapable for either country.⁴⁴ Still, what worries many Canadians is the potential for calculated linkage, or the proclivity of one government to shape a desired outcome in one arena by threatening to tie it to a different arena.

The case of the United States and Canada is actually far from unique. These two countries face a generic problem of the modern nation-state: how to preserve sovereignty against a rising cross-border tide. Borders everywhere have changed. People comprehend familiar borders like the Great Wall of China, the Iron Curtain, the mountain cornices of Switzerland, or the sandy perimeter of islands such as Cuba. Territorial nation-states were predicated on their ability to "secure" their borders.⁴⁵ Today, in the era of nuclear proliferation, instantaneous communication, and McDonald's restaurants in China, borders are increasingly porous and the ideal of sovereignty is undermined and overshadowed.

No modern nation-state is capable of meeting all of the demands of its citizens and of affording the measures that would be necessary to insulate those citizens from extraterritorial lures. According to Duchacek, the explosion of the cross-border flow of ideas, products, persons, and pollutants, constitutes the "perforation" of sovereign boundaries. But, he argues, while the spatial limits of the nation are increasingly perforated, "political authority and loyalties remain territory-bound" because neither ingressive nor egressive flows aim to "destroy the walls of national sovereignties"; "These transborder streams pass through" boundaries; leaving them otherwise intact.⁴⁶ The sieve, paradoxically, is a safety valve: the permeable quality of sovereignty does as much to

preserve as to destroy its integrity. In a detailed chapter on North America, an environment unmatched in its variety of transborder flows, Duchacek explains how Canada continues to pursue its own national goals, immune to the threat of a contrived continentalism. The multiplication and cumulation of transactions does not add up to the integration of the two societies.

It is not known whether spillover actually works or not, but much of Canadian history reflects the Canadian fear that it does. Time and time again, national debate has been dominated by the assumption that closer economic association with the United States would lead to assimilation and annexation. This was dramatized by the reciprocal free trade agreement between the two countries prior to the American Civil War, the Canadian National Policy of the late 1870s, and the 1911 Canadian election, the key issue of which was reciprocity (the Conservative campaign slogan being "No truck nor trade with the Yankees"). Thus, the loud, free trade debate of 1988 is part of a historical, and ongoing dialogue about the connection between economic integration and political union. The discussion about the absorption of Canada into the United States is historic; it has been carried out for more than a century, and it will continue whether or not a borderlands study is carried out.

7. Comparative Borderlands: Mexico and Canada as America's Neighbors

The question of continental integration recalls the comparisons made between the two international borders of the United States. As noted, most observers accept the existence of a borderlands joining the United States and Mexico, but are skeptical of the idea of one connecting the United States and Canada. Aside from obvious differences between the two—the northern border is longer, more sparsely populated, and more regionally diverse—this conclusion seems puzzling.

In the case of the American-Mexican border, two different cultures are involved, there is resistance to the incursion of the smaller (but more rapidly growing) culture, and the border itself is treated as a kind of garrison wall. In the case of the American-Canadian border, the cultures involved are much alike, there is resistance to the intrusion of the stronger culture, and the border itself offers no serious resistance to anyone or anything determined

to cross it. Why is there, presumably, a borderlands between societies so different and not one between societies so similar?

Why is it the closed border that is associated with a borderlands? An open border would presume a greater commonality between peoples, as in the case of Canada and the United States. The paradox of the borderlands is that it exists as a buffer zone between two different societies, and may be unnecessary in the case of two societies as alike as the United States and Canada. It is with Mexico the United States shares a borderlands, despite the American concern about the millions of illegal border crossings. An open border may demarcate two cultures confident in their own identity, and a closed border may signal a fear of irredentism.

The essence of the American-Mexican borderland lies in the dynamic nature of the cultural interaction. Scholars have stressed the sense of "*ambiente*" that comes from the daily, personal interaction across the border. The essence of the borderlands lies in the working out of tension between two dissimilar cultures. Both John Price and Ivo Duchacek refer to an interface, a zone of contact where the "first world"—the industrialist-capitalist nations—is in contiguous and extensive contact with the "third world"—poorer countries struggling to industrialize.⁴⁷ The dynamic mix of two different cultures produces a hybrid.

In the case of Canada and the United States, one might expect a greater affinity to exist than there does in the case of the United States and Mexico. This may be true, because the cultures evolved in Canada and the United States have more similar roots. In fact, the common features of the cultures are not that different from the norm in either. Price stresses an apparent difference between the two borderlands in his focus on the distinction of border cities: "Canada has a much greater economic integration with the United States than Mexico does, but this integration is not achieved through border cities."⁴⁸

Monitoring the border becomes more important in settings where the differences between the two cultures begin to be lost at the border. In the southwestern United States, there is concern about penetration at the margin of the culture. In the case of the forty-ninth parallel, it may be that the two societies are already so close that no buffer is necessary, although this conclusion shortchanges Canada's fears about cultural assimilation. The borderlands, therefore, is more likely to be a buffer zone that guarantees the separation of two cultures than a precursor to

political integration.

The distinctiveness of a buffer zone also reflects continuing tension about the propriety of the border itself. To the extent that the borderlands is a mixing zone, it can be a contested zone as well. The borderlands area is likely to be the subject of debate for the two adjacent societies. Duchacek notes the greater apprehension about the permanence of the southern border: "Psychologically and historically both borders . . . are charged with some bitter memories, including those of violent conflicts and of conquests achieved or contemplated. Nevertheless, the smouldering past, which can be fanned into fire with relative ease along the U.S.-Mexican border, seems to be quite an ash in the United States and Canada."⁴⁹ The conclusion to be drawn is that a borderlands has two central, but antithetical properties: the consensus of "*ambiente*" and the uneasiness of a contested zone.

This difference is determined by which historical phase we are in. The American-Canadian border has been fixed for this century. Today, the demarcation of sovereignty is essentially settled. Prior to the era of the undefended border, however, the main theme in American-Canadian relations was the "struggle for the border" across regions of disputed territory in which the allegiances of the residents were pulled in both directions. One can interpret the sharp reversal in policy between the Proclamation of 1763 and the Quebec Act of 1774 as a change in strategy of the British Crown, which needed to legitimize disputed claims to North American territory.

A major theme in the history of American-Canadian relations from the Appalachians westward lies in working out the differences in regionally contested zones. The problem of differences in claims was tempered by the fact that most of the disputed areas were relatively uninhabited, and significant populations were not displaced by setting firm borders, unlike the cases of the West Bank or the Gaza Strip today. Still, Langelier reminds us about the intensity of the American-Canadian boundary disputes: ". . . the abundance of cartographic documentation they have generated on both sides [of the border] may testify to the bitterness of the negotiations on this subject"⁵⁰ Hence, the historical development of the regional borderlands may be seen, in part, as a series of contests in zones with divided popular loyalties.

A modified definition of borderlands provides the opportunity to treat the two cases of border interactions in North America as

borderlands cousins. Borderlands is the region in which properties of two nations tend to overlap or be exchanged. If the two nations are culturally distinct, this mixing zone will be a hybrid of the two cultures. If the two cultures are culturally similar, the mixing zone will be less clearly distinguishable from the flanking regions, but still a mixing zone.

This approach helps to reconcile the Mexican and Canadian border cases. In the Mexican case, the smaller culture is intruding at the edge of the larger culture, creating tension and resistance. In the Canadian case, the larger culture is pressing against the smaller culture, sustaining the smaller culture's fear of absorption. In reality, the American influence on the Mexican side of the southern border may be no greater than the Canadian influence on the American side of the northern border. Cultural penetration may be roughly equivalent in these two cases. Perhaps some more systematic comparisons may be drawn between these two sets of borderlands once the Canadian-American borderlands scholars have caught up to their colleagues working on the Mexican-American border relationship.

These comparisons call into question the axiom of spillover. It may be that similarity at the border between two societies is actually antithetical to integration. Two similar societies may not require the transnational interactions that lead to considerations of political integration. Most transactions take place between complementary areas, regions which do not mirror one another, but which dovetail. The case of the flow of electricity to New England is an example: the eastern premiers and the New England governors have managed to create a forum for addressing joint regional problems. The bold plan to develop northern Quebec hydropower for American markets dramatizes the economic complementarity of this border region.⁵¹

The reverse situation illustrates the same point. Two transparently similar societies may have a built-in conflict, as seems to be the case with the plains and prairies region shared by the two countries. The border is most open in this region, where it is also the most artificial. Modern sodbusters and stock ranchers, if left to their own devices, would pay it little heed, as did their Indian predecessors who followed the buffalo north and south with the seasons. The way of life on both sides of the border is similar in its lack of economic diversity, but economics does not bring both parts of the region together.

What are the implications of proving the existence of some regional borderlands and not others? Such a test may confirm that people living on the Canadian side of "greater New England" have more in common with their Maine cousins than they do with Quebecers or Ontarians. Or that the offspring of settlers of the Red River Valley of the North, in Minnesota, are mirror images of Manitobans, who have little in common with the automakers or steelworkers of the Great Lakes area. These borderlands influences are far removed from being conditions of spillover. Rather than suggest the basis of a uniform political community in North America, this finding would seem to confirm Joel Garreau's "balkanization" thesis about the "nine nations of North America."

Perhaps this finding may assuage the concern of some Canadian nationalists that the borderlands paradigm could be a Trojan horse of continentalism. The presumption of this borderlands study is that the examination of the degree of similarity, complementarity, or convergence at the common edge of these two nations may be carried out without the use of political integration theory.

8. Conclusion

A border is highly symbolic. Its nature can signal the deep antipathy or fear between two societies, and—as is the Berlin Wall—it can be structured to penalize people who attempt to cross it. Or, as it does in Robert Frost's "Mending Wall," the border may serve to demonstrate the genuine closeness between two neighbors. In 1929, Hugh Keenleyside, a Canadian diplomat, noted that: "The boundary between Canada and the United States is a typically human creation: it is physically invisible, geographically illogical, militarily indefensible, and emotionally inescapable."⁵²

Why address the Canadian-American borderlands? Because it is important, interesting, and accessible. It poses challenges to disciplines in the social sciences and humanities as it combines the features of landscape, people, and their interaction. Some critics might argue that this case is trivial in comparison to the cases of the more hotly contested or fiercely defended borders that regularly claim our attention. The alleged quiescence of Canadians and Americans about their border is perhaps the very reason to examine it closely. The West Bank is more volatile, the Rio Grande may be

more seductive, but no borderlands is more important than this one, not for the headlines that it fails to inspire, but for its comity, which is taken for granted.

Cynics argue that the long border is undefended only because Americans need not defend it and Canadians would fail to if they tried. This argument shows how sharing the border is an uneven experience, one that has fallen mainly to Canadians who have reason to pay more attention to the relationship. But cordial relations cannot be taken for granted, and future accord will depend on Americans making an effort to understand the Canadian view—especially in high-stakes areas such as free trade and acid rain. If Americans and Canadians fail to appreciate the basis of their amity, the understanding necessary for distant nations to coexist in the global community surely will be lacking.

Notes

1. The authors use the plural form, "borderlands," to cover both the singular and the plural use of the term.
2. Seymour Martin Lipset, "Commentary," *Borderlines* 1, no. 7 (May-June 1985): 2.
3. See, for example, John Chay and Thomas E. Ross, eds., *Buffer States in World Politics*, Westview Special Studies in International Relations (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986); and Lee C. Buchheit, *Secession: The Legitimacy of Self-Determination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978).
4. Ivo D. Duchacek, *The Territorial Dimension of Politics: Within, Among, and Across Nations* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986), 268.
5. Duchacek, *Territorial Dimension*, 266.
6. Roger Gibbins, "Canada as a Borderlands Society" (manuscript submitted to the Borderlands Project).
7. Duchacek, *Territorial Dimension*, 266, 265.
8. Joel Garreau, *The Nine Nations of North America* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1981).
9. H.G. Barnett et al., "Acculturation: An Exploratory Formulation," *American Anthropologist* 56 (1954): 990.

10. See D. W. Meinig, *Atlantic America, 1492-1800*, vol. 1 of *The Shaping of America: A Geographical Perspective on 500 Years of History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986).
11. See R. Cole Harris, "Regionalism and the Canadian Archipelago," in *A Geography of Canada: Heartland and Hinterland*, ed. L. D. McCann (Scarborough, Ont.: Prentice-Hall Canada, 1982).
12. See Victor A. Konrad and Michael Chaney, "Madawaska Twin Barn," *Journal of Cultural Geography* 4 (1982): 64-75.
13. Patrick McGreevy, "The End of America: The Beginning of Canada," *The Canadian Geographer* 32, 4 (1989): 307-318.
14. John Prince, "Sabu Visits the Twin Cities Alone," *Bruised Orange, Elektra/Asylum*, 1978.
15. See Wallace Stegner, *Wolf Willow: A History, a Story, and a Memory of the Last Plains Frontier*, Viking Compass Edition (1955; reprint, New York: Viking Press, 1973), part 2, chap. 7.
16. Quoted in W. P. Telford, *Canadian-American Relations*, Canadian Scrapbook Series (Scarborough, Ont.: Prentice-Hall Canada, 1984), 47.
17. Mildred Schwartz, "Political Protest Movements in the Western Borderlands" (manuscript submitted to the Borderlands Project).
18. See Frederick Philip Grove, *Over Prairie Trails*, New Canadian Library, no. 1 (1922; reprint, Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1957); and Stegner, *Wolf Willow*.
19. Garreau, *Nine Nations*, chap. 9; Carl F. Kraenzel, *The Social Cost of Space in the Yonland* (Bozeman, Mont.: Big Sky Books, 1980).
20. R. Cole Harris, "The Historical Geography of North American Regions," *American Behavioral Scientist* 22 (Sept.-Oct. 1978): 115.
21. *Ibid.*, 123.

22. See Barbara Insel, "A World Awash in Grain," *Foreign Affairs* 63 (Spring 1985).
23. See Barry Sadler, "The Western Transboundary Agenda," in *Border Waters: U.S./Canada Transboundary Management*, ed. Lauren McKinsey (Bozeman, Mont.: 49th Parallel Institute, 1978).
24. See "Beyond Borders: A Look at Bioregionalism," *Nexus* 8, no. 4 (Summer 1986).
25. Friedrich Engels, quoted in Seymour Martin Lipset, "Historical Traditions and National Characteristics: A Comparative Analysis of Canada and the United States," *Canadian Journal of Sociology: Cahiers canadiens de sociologie* 11, no. 2 (Summer 1986): 120.
26. See Eric Waddell, "Cultural Hearth, Continental Diaspora: The Place of Quebec in North America," in *A Geography of Canada*, ed. McCann.
27. Barry Berlin, "Mass Communication and the Border War" (manuscript submitted to the Borderlands Project).
28. Darrell Norris, "Nineteenth Century Rural Grave Markers in Southern Ontario and Western New York: A Comparative Material-Cultural Analysis" (manuscript submitted to the Borderlands Project).
29. Chris Merrett, "A Regression Analysis of Canada-U.S. Cross-Border Interaction Distribution" (manuscript submitted to the Borderlands Project).
30. Bruce Hutchison, *The Struggle for the Border* (Toronto: Longmans, Green, 1955).
31. Gilles Langelier, "The Border: Yesterday and Today," *The Archivist* 14, no. 3 (May-June 1987): 5.
32. Bernard DeVoto, foreword to *Strange Empire: A Narrative of the Northwest*, by Joseph Kinsey Howard (New York: William Morrow, 1952), 8.

33. See Richard J. Gwyn, *The 49th Paradox: Canada in North America* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1985); and Ian Lumsden, ed. *Close the 49th Parallel etc The Americanization of Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970).
34. Stegner, *Wolf Willow*, 81, 82.
35. John Kenneth Galbraith, *A Life in Our Times: Memoirs* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1981), 5.
36. Roger Frank Swanson, *Intergovernmental Perspectives on the Canadian-U.S. Relationship* (New York: New York University Press, 1978).
37. Telford, *Canadian-American Relations*, introduction.
38. See Lipset, "Historical Traditions."
39. Ernst B. Haas, *Beyond the Nation-State: Functionalism and International Organization* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1964).
40. See Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, Jr., "Introduction: The Complex Politics of Canadian-American Interdependence," in *Canada and the United States: Transnational and Transgovernmental Relations*, ed. Annette Baker Fox, Alfred O. Hero, Jr., and Joseph S. Nye, Jr. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976).
41. John Sloan Dickey, *Canada and the American Presence: The United States Interest in an Independent Canada* (New York: New York University Press, Council on Foreign Relations, 1975), 4.
42. Richard A. Preston, ed., *The Influence of the United States on Canadian Development: Eleven Case Studies*, Duke University Commonwealth-Studies Center, no. 40 (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1972).
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49. Duchacek, *Territorial Dimension*, 268-69.
50. Langelier, "Border," 7.
51. Martin Lubin, "The Annual Conference of New England Governors and Eastern Premiers" (manuscript submitted to the Borderlands Project).
52. Quoted in Telford, *Canadian-American Relations*, 2.

